

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A multi-layered laminated cereal piece, comprising:

A. from 4 to 20 cereal layers wherein each layer:

1) being fabricated from a cooked cereal dough,

2) having a thickness of about 100 to 500 micrometers,

wherein a quantity of said pieces having:

a piece count ranging from about 6 to 20 per 10g

a bulk density of about 0.06 to 0.4g/cc., and

a moisture content of <6%.

2. The multi-layered cereal piece of claim 1

wherein at least one layer is fabricated from a continuous sheet.

3. The multi-layered cereal piece of claim 2

wherein at least one layer is fabricated from at least two flakes.

4. The multi-layered cereal piece of claim 2

wherein one cereal layer forms a first major exterior face and a second cereal layer forms an opposed second major exterior face.

5. The multi-layered cereal piece of claim 4 wherein each layer is fabricated from a continuous sheet layers.

6. The multi-layered R-T-E cereal piece of claim 5 wherein each layer is fabricated from at least two flakes wherein at least a portion of at least one intermediate dough layer is delaminatable from the adjacent layer.

7. The multi-layered R-T-E cereal of claim 6 further including a topical coating.

8. The multi-layered R-T-E cereal piece of claim 7 further including a fruit paste layer intermediate at least two dough layers.

9. The multi-layered R-T-E cereal piece of claim 2 wherein the piece further includes at least one layer of a non-cereal material intermediate at least two cereal dough layers.

10. The multi-layered R-T-E cereal piece of claim 2 wherein at least one layer comprises a whole grain based cooked cereal dough

11. A method for preparing a multi-layered cereal piece comprising the steps of:

A. providing a compressed laminated cereal dough bed or mass having a multiplicity of distinct horizontally extending parallel thin layers each fabricated from a cooked cereal dough,

wherein the cereal dough bed or mass has

a cumulative thickness of the layers ranges from about 10mm to 25 mm;

a temperature of about 20 °C to about 45 °C, and,

a moisture content of about 15-20%;

B. forming the compressed cereal dough bed or mass into pieces;

C. drying the pieces to a moisture content of about less than 6% to form dried laminated cereal pieces.

12. The method of claim 11

wherein in Step A each layer ranges in thickness from about 100-500 micrometers.

13. The method of claim 12

wherein the compressed bed has a cumulative bed thickness ranges from about 10-25 mm, and

wherein in Step A the dough has a moisture content of about 15-20%.

14. The method of claim 13

wherein at least one cereal dough layer is of a different color or composition.

15. The method of claim 14

wherein at least one layer comprises a whole grain based cooked cereal dough.

16. The method of claim 15

wherein in Step B the pieces each range from about 0.5-5g.

17. The method of claim 16

wherein the bed is free of a sugar syrup binder.

18. The method of claim 17 further comprising the step of:

D. providing the ready-to-eat cereal pieces with a topical coating.

19. The method of claim 5 wherein Step A comprises the sub-steps of:

A1. providing a multiplicity of at least five layers of separate thin sheets of semi-moist cooked cereal doughs, or layers of individual flakes having an initial thickness, and

A2. compressively layering the separate sheets or flake layers to form a single continuous compressed mass having a compressed thickness whereby the layers are bonded together.

20. The method of claim 15

wherein in Step A the sheet further includes at least one layer of a non-cereal material intermediate at least two cereal dough layers.

21. The method of claim 20

wherein in Step A all layers are provided by a quantity of thin flakes, and

22. The method of claim 21

wherein at least one dough sheet or layer of flakes is fabricated from a whole grain cooked cereal dough selected from the group consisting of wheat, rice, corn, oats and barley.

23. The method of claim 22

wherein at least one cooked cereal dough layer or layer of flakes comprises a whole wheat based cooked cereal dough.

24. The method of claim 23 comprises the sub-steps of:

D1. applying a first liquid or binder base coating to form a base coated laminated cereal pieces, and,

D2. applying a particulate top coating to the a base coated laminated cereal pieces to form a topically coated laminated cereal piece.

25. The method of claim 24

wherein the weight ratio of laminated cereal pieces to topical coating ranges from about 1-20:1.

26. The method of claim 25

wherein in Step D, at least a portion of the particulate top coating is supplied by ground sucrose.

27. The method of claim 26

wherein Step D at least a portion of the particulate top coating is supplied by ground cinnamon.

28. The method of claim 23 wherein step D includes:

providing the cereal pieces with a pre-sweetening coating.

29. The method of claim 28 wherein step D comprises:  
coating the cereal pieces with a sugar syrup or slurry coating solution to form coated cereal pieces,  
drying the coated cereal pieces to a moisture content of less than 6%.
30. The method of claim 14 wherein Step A comprises the sub-steps of:
  - A1. providing at least four workable cooked dough sheets to form aligned a top, a bottom and two intermediate layers, and
  - A2. forming the dough sheets into a single laminated sheet having at least four distinct plies adhered to at least a portion of each other.
31. The method of claim 20  
wherein in Step A the dough bed or mass further includes particulates of a non-cereal material intermediate at least two cereal dough layers.
32. The method of claim 31 wherein the non-cereal particulate material includes a blend of powdered sugar and cinnamon.
33. The method of claim 11  
wherein at least one layer comprises a whole wheat based cooked cereal dough.
34. The method of claim 11  
wherein at least one layer comprises a corn based cooked cereal dough.
35. The method of claim 19  
wherein in step A2 the compressed thickness ranges from about 35 to 65% of the initial thickness.
36. The method of claim 35  
wherein the compressed thickness ranges from about 10-25mm.
37. The method of claim 36  
wherein in Step A2 is practiced at compression pressures ranging from about 6 to 300 kPa.
38. The method of claim 37 wherein the compressed bed comprises about 8-12 layers of cereal dough layers.
39. The method of claim 38  
further including adding a fruit paste layer intermediate at least two dough layers.
40. A multi-layered cereal piece prepared according to the method of claim 11.

41. A multi-layered cereal piece prepared according to the method of claim 12.
42. A multi-layered cereal piece prepared according to the method of claim 13.
43. A multi-layered cereal piece prepared according to the method of claim 14.
44. A multi-layered cereal piece prepared according to the method of claim 15.
- 5 45. A multi-layered cereal piece prepared according to the method of claim 20.
46. A multi-layered cereal piece prepared according to the method of claim 25.
47. A multi-layered cereal piece prepared according to the method of claim 30.
48. A multi-layered cereal piece prepared according to the method of claim 35.
49. A multi-layered cereal piece prepared according to the method of claim 39.
- 10 50. The method of claim 11 wherein the steps A-E are practiced in sequential order.